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ABSTRACT

Many individuals who grew up as adopted or foster children felt that they were reared under the shadow of secrecy, silence, and shame, finding it difficult to build an identity and feel secure. Because of the connection to troublesome experiences that resulted in the adoption plan such as alcoholism or teen pregnancy, adoptive and foster parents have a crucial responsibility to communicate the circumstances of their child's past in a manner that will lead to understanding, resolution, and healing. This book for adoptive and foster parents is intended to equip them with the knowledge and tools they will need for a lifetime as they communicate with their adopted or foster child about the complex, troubling, and often painful aspects of his or her fragmented past. Chapters of the book are as follows: (1) "The Power of Secrets on Family Relationships"; (2) "Truth or Consequences: A Great Debate"; (3) "Just the Facts, Ma'am: Why Do Children Need Them?"; (4) "A Fact-Finding Mission: How To Gather What You Need To Know"; (5) "Adoption through a Child's Eyes: Developmental Stages"; (6) "Through a Parent's Eyes: Core Issues, Coping Styles, and Communication"; (7) "The Ten Commandments of Telling: Principles to Consider"; (8) "Sharing the Hard Stuff: The Adoptive Parent's Challenge"; (9) "Tools of Communication between Parents and Children"; (10) "Transracial or Transcultural Adoption: Talking about Adoption within a Minority Family"; (11) "Kinship Foster Care and Adoption: Telling the Truth When It's 'All in the Family'"; (12) Opening a Closed Adoption for School-Age Children: Questions Most Asked by Parents"; (13) "Adolescence-Chronic but Not Terminal: Keeping Lines of Communication Open"; (14) "Opening a Closed Adoption—The Teenage Years"; and (15) "Communicating about Adoption in the Classroom: Teaching the Teachers." An index is included. (Contains a 61 references.) (HTH)

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